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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the following problem: how do power relationships constrain what counts as knowledge in social studies education and thus constitute the field? By looking at speech acts performed in a given socio-linguistic community one can get insight into discursive practices of that community. The present concern is with power relations embedded in discursive practices found in social studies education and thus with ways in which power relations and commitments generate and constrain knowledge in some social studies education. Social studies discourse is examined in three social studies methods texts (Hunt and Metcalf, 1968; Wesley and Wronski, 1973; and Fraenkel, 1973); two research journals (the "Journal of Social Studies Research," and "Theory and Research in Social Education"); and two elementary social studies series ("Windows on Our World," 1980 and "McGraw-Hill Social Studies," 1979). This sampling of social studies discourse suggested eight inferences about the field, which are discussed. One inference states that different discursive practices are constrained and supported by different political commitments. Non-controversiality and control were evident in the elementary textbooks. Information and explanations of a socially reinforcing nature were included. Control was also an important theme in some of the social studies methods textbooks for the simple reason that teachers have a contractual and practical interest in controlling and managing classroom instruction. (RM)

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# Knowledge and Power in Social Studies Education

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# Knowledge and Power in Social Studies Education

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There is not a clear consensus about the nature of social studies education. Let us consider some attempts at definition. An early influential statement was put forward by Wesley as, "the social sciences simplified for pedagogical purposes" (1937, p. 6). Later in his work with Wronski this was modified to, "...those substantive portions of human behavior as well as those procedural modes of inquiry that have been selected and adapted for use in the schools or other instructional situations" (1973, p. 5). Later still in an interview with Shermis and Barth he acknowledged that his earlier views were an oversimplification "designed only to be clear and convincing," and that "Social studies, as I like to think is the content that deals with human relations" (Shermis and Barth, 1978, p. 37). Over the course of a long career Wesley's thought about the field developed and grew richer.

Thoughts about what social studies is has not only changed over time as illustrated in Wesley's thought but there is also diversity of opinion at the present time. Hunt and Metcalf (1968) argue that, "The foremost aim of instruction in high school social studies is to help students reflectively examine issues in the problematic areas of American culture" (p. 288). In contrast to the focus on problematic aspects of society Hertzberg in her well documented history of American social studies notes that one definition, "uses the terms 'social sciences' and 'social studies' virtually interchangeably" (1981, p.2). Fraenkel, if somewhat breathlessly, came to grips with social studies in his methods book with this statement, '

> ...helping students to become more knowledgeable about themselves and the world in which they live, more capable of drawing warranted conclusions about life and living, more appreciative of the complexity of human beings and the societies and cultures which they create, more aware of the diversity of ideas, attitudes, values, and ways of doing things which exist in the world, more skilled in learning and thinking, in caring and doing is, at least in theory, what the social studies are all about. (1980, p. 11)

Barr, Barth, and Shermis (1977) discuss social studies as citizenship education and three competing views of citizenship education as citizenship transmission, the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and devices of particular social science disciplines, and reflective inquiry as decision making in a sociopolitical context. In a well known essay Engle (1960) promoted decision making as the "heart of social studies instruction." There has been diversity longitudinally and cross-sectionally about the field of social studies.

The problem addressed here is this: how do power relationships constrain what counts as knowledge in social studies education and thus constitute the field? Anyon (1979) Clements (1981) and Cornbleth (1982) among others present analysis that touch on the relationship between power and knowledge although the degree to which they focus on this paricular point varies. I will proceed by looking at what is done in social studies education. Since utterances, statements, and discourse constitutes most of what is done by social studies educators I will provide a brief analysis of social studies discourses. In looking at social studies discourses I will rely on the work of Austin and Searle in the English linguistic tradition and the work of Foucault, a French historian of ideas. The fall-out of the argument is that power relationships are important in what counts as knowledge in social studies education. Whether those in the field of social studies are in control of these power relationships remains an open question.

To begin, consider social studies education as a social practice. Following Wittgenstein (1958, pp. 38-39) and Giddens (1979, chapter 2) social practices or activities exist only in conjunction with sets of rules that are both constitutive and regulative. The institution of schooling and social studies instruction may be thought of as practices that are "deeply sedimented in time-space" (Giddens, 1979, p. 80). There is a normative dimension to what goes on. Rules and practices reflect not only ethical and valuative beliefs that constitute and thereby identify objects and activities to be valued or disvalued but are based on meta-ethical and meta-theoretical commitments as well. And this ideological character of practice which may be thought of as essentially non-material has a material counterpart in the power relations of practice. This is where some people are empowered to speak and act authoritatively about some things and others have the opportunity to listen and react.

What we have is a social practice in which some people make knowledge claims that they try to get other people to believe and accept. This was implicit in each view of social studies education mentioned above. The issue for contention was what knowledge claims were central to the field: those from the social sciences, from cultural traditions and heritages, those contained in reflective approaches to social relations, or some combination of these. Knowledge claims in social studies education are made about a wide variety of social events, objects, structures, and processes. Social studies methods teachers make claims about how classrooms should be organized and what will happen if they are or are not so arranged. Social studies teachers make claims about social events that have happened or are happening, the way societies are organized, and so forth. Among these assorted claims are claims about power relations. Social studies educators claim to know a lot about power in social

settings. Power is used here in a broad general sense of relations among people or groups that are characterized by control, influence, or domination.

Now consider the relationship between knowledge and power in social studies education. One is tempted to think of this relationship itself as a power relationship where what we know or claim to know controls what we do and thus structures power relationships among teachers and students, and scholars and teachers. But the relationship between knowledge and power is bi-directional not uni-directional. What I propose is that we consider how power relations at least partially constitute what counts as legitimate knowledge in social studies education.

The Philosophy of Language and Michael Foucault.

The Oxford/Cambridge ordinary language philosophers contributed important insights to our understanding of language. These insights also helped shift the study of language away from logical analysis to rhetorical concern for usage and context. (These developments contributed to undermining logical positivism and empiricism although there is little doubt that the demise of logical positivism and empiricism was caused by their failure to live up to their own standards, Suppe, 1976). These trends can be illustrated by the course of Wittgenstein's career. In the Tractatus he was concerned with logic and a picture theory of meaning. In his posthumously published Philosophical Investigations he considered language much more rhetorically viewing it in the context of language games, rules of knowing how to proceed, depth grammar, and forms of life. Later Austin and Searle located the meaning of utterances in social context and structure but paid little attention to the nature of that structure and context. They showed that utterances are speech acts that get their meaning and force in the context of commitments and obligations of social institutions which they invoke. This work told quite a bit about the

properties of speech acts but little about how they connected to social structure.

Foucault, a French historian of ideas, has made some subtle yet far reaching additions to the study of language and discourse that builds on the work of the English philosophers of language. If speech acts obtain their force from the social context and institutions within which they occur one can easily turn the proposition around. How is it that social institutional arrangements and relations exert control over speech acts and utterances. Foucault is concerned with discursive practices that give rise to discourse. A discursive practice, he writes,

> ...is a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area, the conditions of operation of the enunciative function. (1972a, p. 117)

Discourse, whether in fields he has studied such as that of penal institutions, grammar and sexuality, or in the field of social studies education, occurs within a system of rules. He writes, "Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint" (1980, p. 131). Constraints on the production of knowledge generate an interweaving of power and knowledge. It is important to emphasize that relationships between knowledge and power are no longer characterized by making knowledge claims about power relations but to acknowledge that power relations constrain what can be claimed as knowledge.

Shapiro's comment on Foucault is particularly insightful, "it would be appropriate within his (Foucault's) view, to reverse the familiar notion that persons make statements, and say that statements make persons" (1981, p. 141). Discursive practices create places for speakers. They antedate speakers. They often outlast speakers. Embedded in the rules of discursive practices are

power relations and ideology. Discursive practices identify those who are empowered to assert knowledge claims. They identify legitimate objects of discourse. The terms of the discourse are provided as well.

In an important essay on "The Meaning of Meaning," Hilary Putnam (1975) made a major contribution to clarifying modern thinking about the meaning of terms that is related to Foucault's arguments. Putnam showed that meanings are, "not fixed by a concept that the individual speaker has in his head" (p. 245). Meanings of terms are determined by a socio-linguistic division of labor.

> Every linguistic community ...possesses at least some terms whose associated 'criteria' are known only to a subset of the speakers who acquire the terms, and whose use by the other speakers depends upon a structured cooperation between them and the speakers in the relevant subsets. (p. 228)

This leads to the interesting development that meaning is fixed in the semantic properties of stereotypes. Some elements of stereotypes are rigid and indexical and others less central. To the degree that two speakers share the semantic properties that define a stereotype, and in this sense both share a linguistic competence with respect to a term, they share the meaning of a term.

Putnam's argument is concerned with the philosophical aspects of meaning. He does not pursue the problem of meaning in its social content. But locating that socio-linguistic context is important to thinking about curriculum. In one sense the process of education may be thought of as one social group, students, acquiring the socio-linguistically determined meanings of another group, teachers.

Now we might ask what lingusitic communities characterize social studies education? Foucault (1972b) describes a discursive practice as a "play of dependencies." There are three kinds of dependencies. First are "intradiscursive" dependencies. These are between terms and operations in the same

discourse. For example in the social studies literature, per se, if one traces discussions of citizenship education one encounters alternative theoretical conceptions such as the transmission of dominant cultural values, knowledge of the social sciences, or reflective inquiry as decision making. Second are "interdiscursive" dependencies. This is where one discourse "affects the kind of understanding one can have in another" (Sharpiro, 1981, p. 223). For example, social studies discourse does not proceed without reference to educational psychology, research design, statistical modeling, or measurement techniques. Third are "extradiscursive" dependencies. This is the kind of dependency found between a discourse and a material, non-discursive influence or power relation that may have been produced by another discourse. For example, there are constraints or social studies discourse found in state mandated course requirements and in local curriculum guides. A strategy is suggested for analyzing social studies discourses if certain ideas from Austin, Searle, Foucault, and Putnam are combined. The meaning of terms are fixed in the usages of a socio-linguistic community (Putnam) and socio-linguistic communities are organized in terms of rules and norms (Wittgenstein, Austin, and Searle). Who is permitted to speak authoritively, what is permitted to be said, and what may be talked about is determined by the rules of that community (Foucault). Therefore, by looking at speech acts performed in a given socio-linguistic community one can get insight into discursive practices of that community. The present concern is with power relations embedded in discursive practices found in social studies education and thus with ways in which power relations and commitments generate and constrain knowledge in social studies education.

Three Areas of Social Studies Discourse.

Three social studies methods texts, two journals and two elementary social studies series will be considered. Hunt and Metcalf (1968), and Wesley and Wronski (1973) and Fraenkel (1973) are three teaching methods texts that represent a wide range of thought in the field. What is this field they describe? One way to think about education is to consider it as composed of four irreducible components: students, teachers, subject matter, and social context. Consider that each text presents a separate discourse on the field and speaks a bit to each of these components. Together they contribute to the discourse of the field.

The approach to social studies taken by Hunt and Metcalf reflects the influence of Dewey. "The content of learning," they argue, "may be regarded as the data of acts of reflective thought" (p. 281). This turns the thought of students inward in consideration of what is thought, selected for attention, decided about and acted on. The teacher has the task of helping students reflect about the social past, social structure, and contemporary issues. Society provides the basic topics for study and the backdrop for reflection. Methods of instruction deal with "reflective thought as a teaching method," "how to teach a concept," "teaching generalizations," and so on. Out of the four hundred and fifty pages, thirty seven are devoted to evaluation; no attention is given to learning objectives.

Wesley and Wronski (1973) approach the methods of social studies instruction quite differently. The content for social studies comes from the social sciences simplified for pedgogical purposes. But reflective thinking, unlike its central role for Hunt and Metcalf, is only treated as one approach to social studies, the problems approach (chapter 8). Curriculum content and its selection and organization is treated in terms from educational psychology: comprehension, analysis, evaluation, attending, responding, valuing, and so on

(pp. 56ff). These views make a number of assumptions about students and teachers. Students as actively reflective are not generative of social studies instruction and their interaction with the material is more in terms of assimilation. Teachers, in this view, manage the teaching of more discrete bits of information than in the Hunt and Metcalf account. One hundred and ten pages of three hundred and fifty-four are devoted to instructional media and professional growth, eight pages are given to objectives. Society is less a direct object of study than it is mediated by the social science disciplines.

Fraenkel (1973) shares much in common with Wesley and Wronski. The book itself displays a clearly organizational, managerial style consistent with its view of the field. The discussion of content focuses on existing curriculum offerings and course structure (chapter 2). Following a discussion of the importance of a rationale, and teaching facts and generalizations a turn is taken toward the disciplines. A seeming assumption is that one goal of social studies instruction is essentially concerned with managerial affairs. "The overriding accomplishment of education is that it changes people...The kinds of changes you wish to bring about to represent your goals and objectives" (pp. 2 and 3). The first forty-three pages of the four hundred and twenty-six page book deal with instructional objectives. Later one hundred and fifty-eight pages are spent on the evaluation of cognitive, affective, and skill objectives and planning. One hundred and twenty-seven pages attend to teaching thinking and valuing. The teacher is a manager who contols subject matter, its presentation and evaluation. Content comes from the disciplines in light of dominant curricular patterns. Society is conceptualized as it is presented in those disciplines. The scholar is the authority.

If there is disagreement about social studies by social studies professionals one does not have to search far to find the nature of the disagreement.

Each textbook presents a coherent discourse within itself. But as they contribute to discourse about the field they constitute different objects for attention. Hunt and Metcalf consider the content of learning as the data of reflective thought whereas Wesley and Wronski and Fraenkel turn more to the disciplines. Students and teachers likewise are considered differently. The centrality of students to social studies is radically different. Social issues and the nature of social issues also vary quite a bit.

The discursive practices within which these approaches to social studies education are located are themselves diverse. One, classical liberalism such as that found in the philosophy of John Dewey; another from educational psychology; yet a third from the authority that is attributed to the social science disciplines; and a fourth from views concerning the proper authoritative role of the teacher.

Now consider social studies discourse found in two research journals. The Journal of Social Studies Research is published by the Department of Social Science Education at the University of Georgia. It is in its sixth volume and has published numerous pieces of research on social studies education. The objects of social studies discourse include classroom interaction and teacher expectations (Jeter and Davis, 1982), social studies content knowledge in preservice elementary education majors (Diem, 1982), evaluation of peer microteaching and field experience (Napier and Vansickle, 1981), student ratings and teacher behavior (Land and Smith, 1981), the development of instruments to measure citizenship knowledge and skills (Hepburn and Strickland, 1979), and sex differences in student interests in discipline areas (McTeer, 1979), among others.

Discursive practices related to educational psychology and social sciene research methodology have influenced research in social studies education. An assumption that is explicit in much of this research is that knowledge about social studies instruction is useful in controlling social studies education as process and product. If one assumes that only knowledge in the model of logical positivism or empiricism counts as knowledge, it follows that the tendency will be to focus on objects that lend themselves to quantitative research. Those who are authorized to speak in such a discourse are those who have the technical skills required by behavioral social science research. The influence of this approach to research and knowledge on the three textbooks is clear but uneven. Technical discursive influences were most clearly found in Fraenkel's work and least in that of Hunt and Metcalf.

Theory and Research in Social Education is a quarterly in its ninth volume that has published articles dealing with the following topics: the reappraisal of theoretical goals of research in social education (Shaver, 1982), culture and rationality from Frankfurt school thought (Giroux, 1982), connecting models of theorizing and curriculum theorizing (Wilson, 1982), a critique of an educational psychological paradigm in social studies education (Clements, 1981), relationships between moral thought and moral action (Fraenkel, 1981), on the limits of moral education (Leming, 1981), and toward a reconstruction of social education (Stanley, 1981) among others. Articles reporting quantitative empirical research are not absent but they do not set the intellectual tone of the journal. Quantitative empirical research proposes a constitution of social objects for research purposes that emphasizes control and manipulation of students, teachers, and content (See Clements, 1981). There is a tradition in social studies research that fits this view of things. There are influences from discourses, however, that push in other directions. A reappraisal of

research goals or discussing work of members of the Frankfurt school challanges models of social studies education based on logical empirical research.

Recall Foucault's argument that discursive practices not only constitute objects of discourse but also create places for the speaker in a discourse. For example, these journals have created a place for social studies methods teachers to make statements about social studies education. The other side of creating a place for speakers is the exclusion of others from speaking. Educational administrators, teachers, students, parents, school board members, labor union organizers, politicians, clergy and others are excluded from this discourse. Social studies educators are selective in borrowing from discursive practices outside their field. These interdiscursive dependencies, to use Foucault's term (1972b), are mutually supportive as well as opposing.

Only two elementary social studies series will be mentioned: Windows on Our World (1980) and McGraw-Hill Social Studies (1979). (Windows on Our World is now in a second edition under a different series title and McGraw-Hill Social Studies is soon to be the second of two series marketed by McGraw-Hill). Both series follow rather closely the pattern of topics advocated by Hanna (1963) that moves to ever larger "communities of men" as students progress up the grades. Windows on Our World has the following titles from Kindergarten through grade 6: Me; At Home, At School; In Our Community; Ourselves and Others; Our Home, the Earth; America: Past and Present; and Around Our World. McGraw-Hill Social Studies varies little from the same topical development moving from Kindergarten through grade 6 with: Looking at Me; Discovering Others; Learning About People; Exploring Communities; Studying Cultures; Understanding the United States; and Investigating Societies. Each series also states major learning goals for each grade level in a variety of subject matter areas. Windows on Our World attends to history, geography, citizenship, and

economics; McGraw-Hill Social Studies, to geography, history, economics, political science, anthropology-sociology, and psychology. Windows on Our World was influenced by developments in thinking about global education, this is particularly evident at grade 4. McGraw-Hill Social Studies drew on some older as well as newer themes in social studies: awareness of self and society, knowledge of important factual information and social science concepts and explanations, and skill development in decision making that focused on analyzing values, locating and organizing information and so on. Each series provided a number of teacher aids in the form of lesson outlines by main ideas, key vocabulary, a suggested sequence of activities, evaluation procedures as well as questions for students in the text and so forth.

Marketing considerations also worked to produce a similarity between them. The similarity between the two series extends beyond that which is included and covered; there is also similarity in what is not covered. McGraw-Hill Social Studies had a grade 5 unit on social justice deleted by the editorial staff; Windows on Our World had a grade 5 unit on evolution eliminated. Neither series dealt with conflictual aspects of social life in any detail or with social inequalities or social class. This is consistent with Anyon's findings (1978). Theoretical explanations and concepts are offered but only in an informative and not critical sense. Students learn about the environment, international interactions, theories of learning, communication and decision making but both are silent about social structure in any non-functionalist way. Social controversy and power are largely missing (there are a few isolated exceptions).

Conclusion.

This brief, nonsystematic sampling of social studies discourse suggests a number of preliminary inferences about the field. First, no single discourse

with a coherent set of objects or themes identifies the field of social studies education, rather a variety of discursive practices have been found. Even in what would appear to be a single discursive area, social studies methods texts, a number of different discourses were found.

Second, relationships with other discursive areas have been important in shaping social studies. This was found perhaps most clearly in the two research journals in the field. The articles in one journal are persistently thoroughly informed by objects, research designs, measurement techniques, and research questions suggested by educational psychology. Articles in the second were related to discursive practices in philosophy, social theory, moral development (a mixture of philosophy and developmental psychology), politics, as well as educational psychology. Third, dependencies on non-discursive social practices have been identified. A specified series of curriculum topics are followed in the elementary grades. Controversial topics are notable by their absence in at least two elementary social studies series. The field is characterized, to use Foucoult's analysis again, by a dispersion of topics. There is no coherent discourse that defines the field of social studies education. The topics that occupy those concerned with social studies is widely disparate.

Fourth, three arenas of social studies discourse were found to have different but in some ways reinforcing discursive practices. The two elementary social studies series followed a standard topical sequence, were relatively non-controversial, and attended to control and management of classroom activities. The journals were characterized by attending to different academic disciplines such as educational psychology, the social sciences, social theory and philosophy. The social studies methods textbooks attended to certain philosophical schools of thought, primarily the work of John Dewey, and to

developments in educationa. technology. Fifth, different discursive practices are constrained and supported by different political commitments. Non-controversiality and control were evident in the elementary textbooks. Information and explanations of a socially reinforcing nature were included. Control was also central to research from the tradition of educational psychology. Research was conducted with an eye to "improving" social studies instruction by manipulating variables. Political commitments of other arguments in the journals were concerned with resisting a functionalist reproduction of the social system. Control was also an important theme in some of the social studies methods textbooks for the simple reason that teachers have a contractual and practical interest in controlling and managing classroom instruction. One of the books makes the political content of its approach to social studies explicit by directly addressing the closed areas of society.

Sixth, power relations and commitments that produce different discursive practices are themselves differentially powerful. In social terms discursive and non-discursive practices that constrain what goes into an elementary social studies series seems to be the most powerful of those discussed. It would appear that those who buy elementary social studies texts use a minimax regret decision criterion where one opts to minimize one's maximum regret in choosing texts. One regret to be minimized has to do with enraging parents, administrators, or school board members by dealing with social controversy. Developments in educational technology in drawing up learning objectives and evaluation measures are related to educational psychological research in a utilitarian mode, that is, how does one increase utility in educational settings where utility is defined as achievement measured by objective testing. The power of the implicit political commitments from discourses about learning objectives and quantitative research (interpreted in a positivist manner) comes from the

"practical" demands of classroom management and measurement and from the large number of educational professionals who engage in these practices. Much less widespread and powerful are discourses that deal with social criticism. These arguments, whether one looks at Hunt and Metcalf (1968) or Giroux (1982), contain political commitments that are more transparent than those found in the research tradition of educational psychology.

Seventh, another way to purchase insight into a discursive practice is to note what is absent, that which is not spoken of. Research in the tradition of educational psychology does not speak of social justice or oppression and the social analysis from critical theory does not speak of variables, tests of significance, or principles of research design. In the essay referred to earlier, Hilary Putnam located the meaning of terms in semantic properties that are shared by a linguistic community. To the extent that two individuals share the same indexical properties (stereotypes) they share the meaning of a term. It follows, therefore, that if they are to share the meaning of a term they must both be linguistically competent--in terms of the same linguistic community. What we find in social studies education are discursive practices and linguistic communities that border and overlap and those that are different and distinct. It is not surprising that those which overlap tend to share similar political commitments. Quantitative, behavioral research in a non-critical tradition is concerned with control as are textbook publishers but for different reasons.

Eighth, it may be hypothesized that if one could conduct a frequency count of all of the statements made in the field of social studies in terms of the rough groupings mentioned above they would be distributed in proportion to the relative power of each discursive practice. The political commitment to control would far outstrip attention given to social criticism. If this is the

case, then the separate discourses that constitute social studies education contribute directly to citizenship transmission and social reproduction in a way not articulated in the literature. There commitments structure the hidden curriculum. The discursive practices of the field envelop us and lead us to be anonymous speakers who only speak about the objects, themes, and concepts that the discursive practices permit. An important question at a meta-level is whether it is possible to get control of discourses and their political commitments. A second question is how one might get control of what one enunciates instead of merely being contributor to an on-going discourse.

In bringing this essay to an end it is useful to return to Foucault's argument. In his view discursive practices create places for speakers. This depends on a distinction between language and speech. Language provides an idefinitely large number of possible utterances from which people choose when they speak. A discursive practice only admits as legitimate some utterances. For example, one discourse might admit statements about statistical tests in determining whether students learn more facts while playing a simulation game than when listening to a lecture. In that discourse statements challenging the importance of learning one set of facts compared to another is not authorized. In this way people may be thought of as anonymous as they select from admissible statements when joining in a given discursive practice.

Discursive practices change due to technological developments, such as the development of learning objectives, or power relations, such as changes in state law concerning social studies instruction or evaluation. Foucault is ambivalent about the role individuals have in initiating or changing discursive practices. Paradoxically part of his project, quite simply, is to help people get control over the constraints and power relations of discursive practices.

> The essential political problem for the intellectual is not to criticize the ideological contents supposedly linked to science, or to ensure that his own scientific practice is accompanied by a correct ideology, but that of ascertaining the possiblity of constituting a new politics of truth. The problem is not changing people's consciousnesses--or what's in their heads--but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth. (1980, p. 133)

If the argument that has been presented thus far is correct we are now presented with the following problem. If those who engage in social studies discourse may be thought of as captives of pre-existing discursive practices, how can they ever, by their own efforts alter "the institutional regime of the production of truth?"

To the extent that power relations determine what counts as truth in social studies discourse, it follows, that one must get control of these power relations if one is to control discursive practices that constitute social studies education. One strategy for getting control of things, and it is not entirely satisfactory, is first to illuminate power relations embedded in alternative discursive practices and, second, to selectively choose among those discursive practices, in terms of prior political commitments. This demands analysis combined with political action. This calls for an explicit politicization of discursive practices in social studies education. Politicization of discourse is one way to illuminate our choice among discursive practices otherwise political commitments of discursive practices will remain largely invisible. They are largely invisible because discourse about research design, educational objectives, curricular sequence and so on are thought not to be about power but knowledge.

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